

Coins

An E Pluribus Quiz for all numismatists

By Roger Boye

MOST SERIOUS collectors would answer correctly at least eight of the questions in this quiz. How many of the answers do you know? [No fair looking at the coins in your pocket or purse.]

1. Name at least two regular-issue United States coins on which the American Indian appears.

2. The Latin words "E Pluribus Unum" appear on every U.S. coin currently minted. What do they mean?

3. What other words or numbers appear on every U.S. coin currently minted?

4. True or false: The date on a U.S. coin always indicates the year in which the coin was made?

5. If you wanted to buy an uncirculated coin from a dealer, would you look at a coin marked by the dealer as AU, BU, or CU?

6. Generally speaking, what has been the most popular obverse design and the most popular reverse design on regular-issue U.S. coins made since the Coinage Act of 1792?

7. True or false: A good way to detect a piece of counterfeit U.S. currency is to look carefully at the paper. Genuine currency is printed on paper containing visible red and blue fibers?

8. Why were some bills [series 1934, 1934-A and 1935-A] stamped with the word "Hawaii" on both sides?

9. What color are the serial numbers on Federal Reserve Notes currently being made?

10. The \$2 bill that was put into circulation on April 13 has been criticized by some historians, especially those living in New Hampshire. Why?

ANSWERS:

1. The "Indian-head" cent [made from 1859 to 1909] and the "Buffalo" nickel [made from 1913 to 1938] are the most common. However, an Indian also appears on several U.S. gold coins, in-

cluding the \$5 gold piece made from 1908 to 1929, and the \$10 gold piece made from 1907 to 1933.

2. "From many, one" or "one out of many."

3. "United States of America," "Liberty," "In God We Trust." Words giving the coin's denomination and numbers giving the date.

4. False. The date usually indicates the year in which the coin was made, but not always. To cite one of many possible examples: In 1975, the U.S. Mint produced quarters, half dollars, and dollar coins dated 1974, and dated 1776-1976.

5. "BU," or "brilliant uncirculated." "AU" means "almost [but not quite] uncirculated." "CU" is used by some paper money collectors for "crisp uncirculated."

6. Obverse [heads] side: The Goddess of Liberty [in various designs and sizes]. Liberty was probably more popular on 19th Century coins than on 20th Century coins. Reverse [tails] side: The eagle [also in various designs and sizes].

7. True.

8. These bills were specifically for use in the Pacific area during World War II. They were made in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, and \$20, and had a brown-colored Treasury seal. Today, they are collector items, ranging in value from \$15 [for an uncirculated series 1935-A \$1 silver certificate stamped "Hawaii"] to \$600 [for an uncirculated series 1934 \$20 Federal Reserve Note stamped "Hawaii"]].

9. Green.

10. John Trumbull's painting of the signing of the Declaration was used on the reverse side. However, government craftsmen removed [cropped out] six signers from the painting in order, they say, to fit it in the space available on the bill. Among the six signers deleted were two representing New Hampshire.